Defence Minister's visit to Foreign Countries

1102. SHRI AKANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has visited a number of foreign countries during the. last *six* months;

(b) if so, the details thereof aiongwith the purpose of his visits;

(c) whether any agreement has been signed by him with any of the foreign country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. I visited the following foreign countries during the period 1.1.2000 to 30.6.2000.

(i) Japan from January 11—14, 2000;

(ii) Vietnam from March 26—30, 2000;

(iii) Japan from June 7—9, 2000;

(iv) United Kingdom from June 13—17, 2000;

(v) the Russian Federation from June 26—30, 2000.

While my visits at serial Nos. (i), (ii), (iv) and (v) were official visits at the invitation of my counterparts in these countries, the visit to Japan on June 7—9, 2000 was to attend the funeral ceremony of the former Japanese Prime Minister *on* June 8, 2000 as a Special Envoy of the Government of India.

During my visits to the above countries, bilateral, regional and international *issues* were discussed with the leaderships of these countries. These discussions focused on matters relating to bilateral cooperation in the field of defence.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However at the end of my visit to Vietnam and the Russian Federation, Minutes/Protocol on the results of the official talks were signed by both sides. It will not be in the interest of national security to disclose details of the talks held with these countries.